

**BLUE BALL PROPERTIES AREA
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
NEW CASTLE COUNTY, DELAWARE**

**PRESERVING PART OF
DELAWARE'S HERITAGE:
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EXCAVATION AND
HISTORIC BUILDINGS
IN BRANDYWINE HUNDRED
AND NORTHERN
NEW CASTLE COUNTY**



**US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration**



**Delaware
Department of Transportation**



■ Age of Improvements

The area around Concord Pike (Route 202) is one that has undergone significant change through the years as it has gone from pastoral farm land to an industrial and residential landscape. A place rich with history, this area, known as Brandywine Hundred, helps tell part of the story of northern Delaware's past as it looks to the future.



■ Documenting the Past for the Future

The existing built historic resources are well documented and researched in this area. Now, valuable information below ground is in the process of being unearthed. Archaeologists are working to excavate precious information about the people and industries of the past in what is known as the Blue Ball Properties Area.

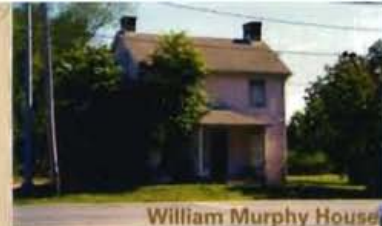
Through this process, archaeologists learn

about people's lifeways, skills, knowledge and adaptation to change from prehistoric to historic resources.

People have lived in the Wilmington, Delaware

area for at least the past 12,000 years.

Archaeologists are looking for evidence of the activities of the Native Americans and of the people of European descent who lived in the area prior to the modern era. Several archaeological sites, dating from about 3,000 years ago to the 1920s, are known to exist and may be affected by the proposed Transportation Improvement Project. Archaeological testing is currently being conducted to locate additional sites and to find out if any of the known sites



William Murphy House

can teach us new information about the people who lived there. If any of the sites can provide us with new and important information, larger portions of the sites will be excavated to retrieve that significant information.

Some of the previously identified historic resources in the area include a National Historic Landmark, residences along Rock Manor Avenue, and contributing historic elements in the Nemours Historic District.

■ Lombardy Hall

Lombardy Hall is the former home of Gunning Bedford, Jr., signer of the Constitution and delegate to the Continental Congress. Standing along Route 202, this site is a National Historic Landmark.



Lombardy Hall



■ **Nemours Historic District and Contributing Elements**

The Nemours Historic District takes its name from the estate built by Alfred I. du Pont in 1910. It incorporates many buildings and structures constructed for the estate as well as others that pre-date the Nemours mansion. Homesteads such as the William Murphy house and Bird-Husbands house are vacant today, but became part of the estate in the early twentieth century to house employees.

One of the most prominent structures within the Nemours Historic District is the Blue Ball Barn. The barn was constructed in 1914 as part of the farming operation that produced food and dairy products for the estate. At the time of its construction it incorporated innovative agricultural processes that addressed the concerns for cleanliness in milk production.

All of the respective elements of the Nemours Historic District and surrounding area preserve a small corner of the agricultural and industrial heritage of Brandywine Hundred.

■ **Rock Manor Avenue**

The residences identified as eligible historic resources in this area were constructed in the early twentieth century and are excellent local examples of suburbanization and the diversity of architectural styles around Wilmington.



■ **For more information please contact:**

Delaware Department of Transportation

Michael C. Hahn, AICP

P 302-760-2131

E mhahn@mail.dot.state.de.us

McCormick, Taylor & Associates, Inc.

Barbara J. Shaffer

P 717-540-6040

E bjshaffer@mccormicktaylor.com